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THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

November 23, 1993

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT CLINTON
AND
PRESIDENT KIM YONG-SAM OF SOUTH KOREA
IN PRESS AVAILABILITY

The East Room

1:07 P.M. EST

PRESIDENT CLINTON: Good afternoon. It is a great pleasure and an honor for me to welcome President Kim Yong-sam to Washington today. During my visit to Seoul in July, I had the opportunity to visit with President Kim at the Blue House, which is Korea's presidential residence. I am honored to return his gracious hospitality today by welcoming him to our White House.

I have a great deal of admiration for President Kim, who for decades has worked tirelessly to broaden Korea's democracy at great personal cost to himself. His democratic passage to the presidency is an inspiring measure of Korea's progress -- proof that freedom knows no regional bounds. I'm delighted his contributions to Korean democracy were acknowledged when he received the Averell Harriman award from the National Democratic Institute last evening.

The discussions President Kim and I held today were far-ranging and highly productive. We continued our conversation from the APEC leaders meeting in Seattle and expressed our mutual support for APEC's ideal of an Asian Pacific region even more closely integrated through open markets and open societies.

Today we discussed the actions President Kim is taking to advance that vision in his nation. He's taken a number of encouraging steps to remove barriers to foreign investment, open financial markets and strengthen intellectual property rights. I'm also very encouraged by the good start of the U.S.-Korea dialogue on economic cooperation. We must work now to implement the proposals raised in that dialogue. Our economic cooperation will be especially vital as both our nations seek to achieve a new GATT agreement in the next few weeks. Like the United States, Korea has both a crucial role and a substantial stake in bringing the Uruguay Round to a successful conclusion.

The most important piece of our discussions centered on North Korea. We are both concerned by North Korea's concentration of forces near the Demilitarized Zone, and by its refusal to grant international inspectors full access to its nuclear sites.

In recent weeks, my administration has been working with the Congress, South Korea, Japan, our partners in the United Nations Security Council and others to address North Korea's nuclear program in a firm manner. Today, I reaffirmed to President Kim America's unyielding commitment to South Korea's security. My administration has made it clear to North Korea that it now faces a simple choice. If it abandons its nuclear option and honors its international nonproliferation commitments, the door will be open on a wide range of issues not only with the United States, but with the rest of the

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world. If it does not, it risks facing the increased opposition of the entire international community.

Our goals in this matter are clear: a nonnuclear peninsula and a strong international nonproliferation regime. To these ends, we are prepared to discuss with North Korea a thorough, broad approach to the issues that divide us, and once and for all to resolve the nuclear issue. But we cannot do that in the absence of a dialogue between North and South Korea and while there is still growing doubt about the continuity of IAEA safeguards.

North Korea's nuclear program and its continuing military threat pose serious challenges to both South Korea and America. Our two nations have worked together to overcome these challenges before. Our friendship was forged in the heat of war as our forces fought shoulder to shoulder to turn back aggression. Our friendship has continued over four decades since that war ended as the people of Korea have transformed their country into an economic and democratic model for the entire region.

I've enjoyed working with President Kim to deepen the historic friendship between our two nations. And I look forward to working with him and with the Korean people in the days to come -- on economic issues and on important issues of security.

Mr. President.

PRESIDENT KIM: Ladies and gentlemen, first of all I would like to thank President Clinton for his welcome extended to me at the White House today. Having met with President Clinton in Seoul in July and Seattle last week, and here in Washington, D.C., today, I feel like I'm meeting an old friend.

President Clinton has aptly summarized what was discussed in our meeting this morning, so I would like to add only a few points to what he has mentioned. President Clinton reaffirmed the strong commitment of the United States to the security of Korea and made it clear that there would not be an additional reduction of U.S. troops stationed in Korea until the North Korean nuclear issue has been resolved.

President Clinton and I agreed to continue our close working relationship to ensure peace on the Korean peninsula as well as its regional stability. In particular, I welcomed and supported President Clinton's policy of continuing to maintain the strategy of forward deployment by the United States in the Asia Pacific region, including the Korean peninsula.

As for the North Korean nuclear issue, President Clinton and I reaffirmed our shared belief that the resolution of this issue should not be delayed any longer, as it poses great threats not only to the security of Korea, but also to the global nonproliferation regime. In particular, we agreed to make thorough and broad efforts to bring about a final solution, bearing in mind the grave concern the international community has demonstrated over this issue. Both of us expressed satisfaction of the close cooperation between our two governments on this issue. And we once again agreed that the maintaining a close working relationship is essential to the complete resolution of this issue.

President Clinton and I share the mutual satisfaction over the success thus far of the dialogue for economic cooperation, a mechanism that we had agreed to establish in our meeting in July. We hope that our two countries will be able to draw up a long-term plan to expand our mutually beneficial economic cooperation.

I also explained to President Clinton that the internationalization of the Korean economy, along with the

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liberalization and deregulation were major goals of the new economic policy that my government has actively pursued, and that the new economic policy would help broaden the scope of the Korea-U.S. economic partnership.

During our discussion, I congratulated the President Clinton, the success of the APEC leaders economic conference that was held in Seattle last week. And I would like to pay high tribute to the President for his outstanding leadership which helped to make the meeting a resounding success.

We are convinced that this meeting will be recorded as an important milestone that heralds the coming era of a new Asia Pacific partnership. Based upon the continued development of APEC, President Clinton and I reaffirmed our resolve to work closely together to build a new Pacific community.

I'm entirely satisfied with today's meeting. I'm confident that our meeting will help Korea-U.S. relations to evolve to an even higher dimension of partnership.

Finally, I again would like to express my gratitude to President Clinton for the warm welcome and hospitality.

Thank you.

Q Mr. President, you've spoken to a new approach to get North Korea to open up its nuclear program to inspection. Did the two of you agree today on a new approach, and does that represent any relaxation in the U.S. stand? And if so, why wouldn't that be rewarding North Korea for its intransigence?

PRESIDENT CLINTON: We did not agree to relax anything. What we agreed was that the two of us, based on our own security needs, would reexamine what our policies are if the North Koreans are willing to allow IAEA inspectors and resume the serious dialogue with the Republic of Korea; that we needed to make it clear that all of our security decisions should be made in light of that context. And I don't consider that weakening our position or changing it, or rewarding aggression.

In fact, what we want to do is to diminish military tensions in the area. That has to begin by a willingness on the part of North Korea to allow the inspections and to resume the dialogue.

Q Mr. President, it doesn't sound like you two are in sync on what to do about North Korea. And also, do you think that North Korea will accept our approach of more concessions?

PRESIDENT CLINTON: Well, we're asking them to make two concessions that they're already committed to do. And we're committing then that the two of us will reexamine our security approach in light of that. But we're not divided at all. We reached agreement; we, indeed, have reconciled the precise language that would be used by each of us in this statement today. So there is no division between the two countries on our position.

Q -- call off the military --

PRESIDENT CLINTON: That is something that would have to be decided by both of us at a later date, depending on what would be done or not done by North Korea. We've made no decision on that and no commitment on that, and we couldn't now.

Q Mr. President, I have two questions, one for President Kim and one for President Clinton. President Kim, it might be a -- question, however, you -- (inaudible) -- denied several times that the concept of the absorption unification; so that statement can

be construed to the -- (inaudible) -- you are giving up your constitutional authority to -- (inaudible) -- North Korea in the case of the self-destruction followed by the self-destruction of the -- (inaudible) -- followed by the -- (inaudible) -- situation like East Germany. And -- (inaudible) -- also give some clear statement for the North Korean people who are waiting for the new morning as you said yesterday for -- (inaudible). And for Mr. Clinton, North Korea has -- (inaudible) -- to wage a war if U.N. sanctions will be imposed in North Korea. And also -- (inaudible) -- police -- (inaudible) -- classified material you are losing -- Korea and the United States is losing if -- (inaudible) -- in the peninsula. So that kind of information is giving some -- (inaudible) -- more and more to the general innocent people in both North Korea and South Korea. So what is the clear and maybe present remarks concerning that matter -- the menace of the possible Korean war -- (inaudible)? Thank you.

PRESIDENT KIM: I would like to respond to your question first. It is our basic policy that we will not try to absorb North Korea. And I mentioned this to the Chinese leader, Mr. Jiang Zemin, when I met him in Seattle; and also asked him to convey this message towards North Korea, because we know that North Korean regime is very concerned about the possibility of such an absorption be happening. And the Chinese President promised that he will do so, that is, to convey the message towards North Korea.

Of course, it is very difficult to predict what will happen in North Korea in the future. But I doubt the report that North Korea can launch a successful attack on South Korea and win the war. I very much doubt it. The reason is that South Korean armed forces has grown very strong; and in fact after the launching of the new government in Korea, we have replaced all those politicized military generals and established a professional military who will respond very effectively to any provocations or any attempt from North Korea. So combined forces of the United States and Republic of Korea -- very stable, decisive and very strong.

As President Clinton mentioned when he visited Korea, we very much believe in the policy of the United States, the new government's policy, that as long as Korean people want the U.S. forces to be stationed in Korea, then there will be no reduction, no pullout of the U.S. troops.

So I would like to once again reassure you that our defense capability and defense posture remains unchanged. And we are in a position that can deal with North Korea in a position of strength.

PRESIDENT CLINTON: With regard to the two questions you asked me, let me say that neither President Kim nor I are eager to go to the United Nations and ask for sanctions against North Korea. We had discussed with the leaders of Japan and China at the recent APEC meeting the fact that that is not a particularly attractive option. We have offered as clearly as we could to North Korea the opportunity to reassess our relationships, at least in terms of our security requirements, if they will simply follow their own commitments and honor them on the IAEA inspections and on resuming the dialogue with the Republic of Korea.

Now, as to your second question, I can only reiterate what I said when I was in Korea. I know of no one who seriously believes that the United States and the Republic of Korea would be defeated in a war of aggression by North Korea if they were to attack. And I made it as clear as I could that if they were to do that, they would pay a price so great that the nation would probably not survive as it is known today.

Q Mr. President, the International Atomic Energy Agency has suggested that there is a time sensitivity to going back

into North Korea and inspecting the two nuclear facilities -- a month or two months maximum. After that, they couldn't guarantee that North Korea was, in fact, abandoning some sort of nuclear weapons program. Is that, in fact, the case? Is there a month or two that you have now in order to resolve this issue?

And a question to President Kim: Do you support this notion that if the North Koreans do accept some sort of inspection and resume a dialogue with you, that the United States and South Korea should cancel the joint military exercises, Team Spirit, next year?

PRESIDENT CLINTON: First of all, there is some time sensitivity on this based on what we hear from the IAEA inspectors. And that's the reason that we're coming forward now and trying to make another good faith effort and reach out and reason with North Korea.

PRESIDENT KIM: With regard to the issue of inspection of the nuclear facilities in North Korea, President Clinton and I share opinion that still inter-Korean mutual inspection is very important. North Korea and South Korea seem to have different position with regard to the meaning of the exchange of special envoy.

I think that North Korea is more interested in holding an inter-Korean summit meeting through this exchange of special envoys, whereas our side, Republic of Korea, is more concerned about removing the suspicions regarding the nuclear facilities -- that is, mutual inspection by both Koreas of those facilities.

There is a speculation that if North Korea accepts International Atomic Energy Agency inspection and resumes dialogue with South Korea, then there will be concessions to be given to North Korea in return.

I think this matter of suspending Team Spirit exercise should be dealt in its own. And, of course, the United States and Republic of Korea will consult very closely about how to deal with the problem caused by North Korea's nuclear development. And in that sense, we are in full accordance with each other.

Q I'd like to ask a question -- addressing the question to President Kim. You said you cannot wait indefinitely, and when is the limit in time? How are you going to decide that is the limit for President Clinton to say thorough and broad approaches you would apply? And in Seattle during your press conference, you used the term "comprehensive approach." Comprehensive approach -- is it the same term that North Koreans are talking about with regard to nuclear issues and other issues above? And is there any difference between the --

PRESIDENT KIM: I'll respond to your question first. The fact that I said we will not wait endlessly doesn't mean that we will necessarily set a certain deadline. And I don't think it is appropriate for me to specifically mention the possibility of setting a deadline. And perhaps I will make no more comments about that.

With regards to your referring to the terminology of whether it will be comprehensive approach or whether it will be package deals, I see the possibility of these different terminologies creating confusion and misleading. Therefore, what we have agreed today, between President Clinton and I, -- and I would very much want you to pay attention to the phrases that we have used today -- is that we will make thorough and broad efforts to bring the issue to the final conclusion. And that stands on its own. And please make sure that you pay attention to these new phrases.

Q Mr. President, I'm a little confused by what you and the Korean President have offered today. Why after so many months do you believe that review of your security possibilities and talking to the Koreans about potential concessions in the future will cause them to change their minds when they have not at this point so far, and when it appeared that there was some sort of actual concessions that you were getting ready to make?

PRESIDENT CLINTON: Well any concessions -- first of all, concessions is the wrong word. Any gesture we make, any move we make based on our -- must be based on our appreciation of what the security situation is. And they are the ones, after all, who are out of line with the international law and their own commitments. So, we can't make any decisions about what we would do until we see what they do; that's all we're saying today. But we have clearly broadened the dialogue on this, or given them, rather, the more specific thing would -- we've given them a chance to broaden the dialogue. We'll just have to see if they take us up on it.

Thank you very much.

END

1:38 P.M. EST

PROPOSED REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
FOLLOWING HIS MEETING WITH PRESIDENT KIM
OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA

GOOD AFTERNOON. PRESIDENT KIM YOUNG SAM AND I CAME TO KNOW EACH OTHER WELL DURING MY VISIT TO SEOUL LAST JULY, SO I AM DELIGHTED TO HAVE A CHANCE TO RETURN HIS GRACIOUS HOSPITALITY HERE IN WASHINGTON. OUR DISCUSSIONS TODAY WERE OPEN, FAR-RANGING, AND PRODUCTIVE -- TYPICAL OF THE CLOSE AND COOPERATIVE RELATIONS THAT EXIST BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES. WE ARE ALLIES AND PARTNERS WORKING FOR PEACE, STABILITY, AND PROSPERITY ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA, IN THE PACIFIC REGION, AND ELSEWHERE. PRESIDENT KIM AND I HAVE BEEN DEEPENING AND EXPANDING AN ALREADY SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIP.

I FEEL A GREAT SENSE OF AFFINITY WITH PRESIDENT KIM, WHO FOR DECADES HAS BEEN IN THE FOREFRONT OF EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE KOREAN DEMOCRACY. HE WAS ELECTED PRESIDENT ABOUT THE SAME TIME THAT I WAS, AND HAS ALSO BEGUN AN AMBITIOUS PROGRAM OF DOMESTIC REFORM. WE ADMIRE HIS BOLD STEPS TO INCREASE GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY AND INSTITUTIONALIZE DEMOCRACY IN KOREA.

FOR TWO YEARS, OUR COUNTRIES HAVE WORKED TOGETHER CLOSELY TO RESOLVE DOUBTS ABOUT NORTH KOREA'S NUCLEAR INTENTIONS. WE ARE TROUBLED BY THE SLOW PACE OF OUR NEGOTIATION WITH THE NORTH AIMED AT SECURING ITS COMPLIANCE WITH NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION OBLIGATIONS. AS LONG AS THESE TALKS SHOW SOME PROMISE OF RESOLVING THIS DIFFICULT AND DANGEROUS ISSUE, THE UNITED STATES WILL ENGAGE NORTH KOREA DIPLOMATICALLY ON THE BASIS OF THE PRINCIPLES OUTLINED IN THE JUNE 11 JOINT US-DPRK STATEMENT. IF IT BECOMES CLEAR THAT WE CANNOT FIND A SOLUTION THROUGH DIALOGUE, WE WILL RECOMMEND THAT THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL CONSIDER OTHER STEPS.

WE WILL EQUALLY SUPPORT THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA'S PATIENT EFFORTS TO REALIZE A SOUTH-NORTH DIALOGUE AND TO IMPLEMENT THE DECEMBER 1991 INTER-KOREAN RECONCILIATION AND DE-NUCLEARIZATION AGREEMENTS.

AMERICA'S COMMITMENT TO KOREA'S SECURITY IS UNDIMINISHED. IT UNDERPINS OUR RELATIONSHIP. OUR ALLIANCE CONTRIBUTES TO THE PEACE AND STABILITY NOT ONLY OF THE KOREAN PENINSULA, BUT OF THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION AS A WHOLE. MY ADMINISTRATION WILL MAINTAIN A SUBSTANTIAL MILITARY PRESENCE IN KOREA AND ELSEWHERE IN THE REGION. BECAUSE OF THE UNCERTAINTY OVER NORTH KOREA'S NUCLEAR INTENTIONS, I TODAY REAFFIRMED TO PRESIDENT KIM OUR INTENTION TO MAINTAIN U.S. TROOP STRENGTH IN THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA AT CURRENT LEVELS FOR AS LONG AS NECESSARY.

WE ALSO WELCOME KOREA'S DETERMINATION TO LIBERALIZE AND INTERNATIONALIZE ITS ECONOMY. PRESIDENT KIM HAS LAUNCHED A MULTI-YEAR PROGRAM TO IMPROVE THE TREATMENT OF FOREIGN INVESTORS, TO OPEN FINANCIAL MARKETS, AND TO STRENGTHEN INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY PROTECTION. JUST AS IMPORTANT ARE MEASURES AIMED AT REDUCING REGULATION, MAKING GOVERNMENT PROCESSES MORE PREDICTABLE AND TRANSPARENT, AND REMOVING INFORMAL BARRIERS TO IMPORTS. PRESIDENT KIM HAS WAGED AN UNRELENTING AND SO FAR EXTREMELY SUCCESSFUL WAR ON CORRUPT ACTIVITY. SUCH REFORMS ARE VITAL. THEY WILL ENABLE KOREA TO REACH ITS GOAL OF BEING RECOGNIZED AS A DEVELOPED ECONOMY AND AN ATTRACTIVE PLACE TO DO BUSINESS, ENHANCING OUR ABILITY TO BUILD A STRONG ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP. WE ARE ACTIVELY PURSUING THIS GOAL IN THE DIALOGUE FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION. I AM ENCOURAGED BY THE PROGRESS THUS FAR AND LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING THE CONCRETE RESULTS OF OUR COOPERATIVE EFFORTS.

PRESIDENT KIM AND I SHARE A COMMON VISION OF THE FUTURE OF THE ASIAN-PACIFIC REGION. THE "NEW DIPLOMACY" THAT THE ROK UNVEILED LAST MAY STRESSES REGIONAL SECURITY, MARKET OPENING, AND SUPPORT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND OTHER UNIVERSAL VALUES. IT RESONATES CLOSELY WITH THE "NEW PACIFIC COMMUNITY" CONCEPT I OUTLINED WHEN I SPOKE TO THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY IN SEOUL. WE SHARE THESE GOALS: TO ELIMINATE TRADE BARRIERS; TO INTEGRATE THE DYNAMIC ASIA-PACIFIC ECONOMIES -- WHICH INCLUDE OUR OWN, OF COURSE -- MORE CLOSELY; TO PURSUE A DIALOGUE ON POST-COLD WAR

CHALLENGES WITH ALL NATIONS OF THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION; AND TO FOSTER AMONG THEM HABITS OF COOPERATION AND MORE NORMAL POLITICAL RELATIONS, IRRESPECTIVE OF PAST ENMITIES OR IDEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES.

BY ANY MEASURE, THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA HAS EMERGED AS A MAJOR PLAYER ON THE WORLD SCENE -- ITS DEMOCRATIC ACHIEVEMENTS, POLITICAL REFORMS, AND ECONOMIC SUCCESSES ARE ADMIRERD AND STUDIED BY MANY OTHER COUNTRIES. THE CLOSE PARTNERSHIP OUR TWO COUNTRIES HAVE FORGED HAS IN RECENT YEARS MOVED TO A PLANE OF EQUALITY. WE ESPECIALLY APPRECIATE THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA'S GREATER PARTICIPATION IN MULTILATERAL EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE SHARED VALUES ELSEWHERE IN THE WORLD.

DINNER TOAST

Mr. President, Mrs. Kim, distinguished guests:

Tonight marks the first time in my Administration that I have had the honor to welcome a visiting head of state at dinner. How fitting that it be President Kim Young Sam, who welcomed me to the Republic of Korea in July!

President Kim exemplifies Korean democracy. He was elected on a platform of political reform. He and his colleagues have made great strides toward fulfilling campaign pledges to root corruption from government and revitalize national life.

We all know of South Korea's remarkable economic record. In 1960, per capita GNP was \$80; today it is nearly \$8000. To understand how that could happen, we need only to take note of the remarkable record of accomplishment of Korean-Americans -- a community whose million-plus members are contributing enormously to the dynamism and diversity of American life.

The Republic of Korea naturally has come to be seen by countries still on the road to development as a model of self-reliance and fortitude. It has shown the superiority of free institutions in decades of competition with the rival regime in the North. There is no longer a contest. North Korea is shunned by the world community, while South Korea is a valued partner in regional and global endeavors.

As in any friendship, there are issues that arise between us. Yet these issues -- chiefly concerning our bilateral economic relationship and Korea's responsibilities in the global trading system -- might as well be called problems of success. We can deal with them successfully if we bear in mind the long-run benefits of determined action.

President Kim, it is with admiration and respect for the achievements you have recorded so early in your administration that I raise my glass and invite everyone to join me in a toast to you, to Mrs. Kim, and to the Republic of Korea -- may democracy continue to flourish there, and the dream of peaceful reunification on a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula soon become reality.

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

November 23, 1993

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT CLINTON
AND
PRESIDENT KIM YONG-SAM OF SOUTH KOREA
IN EXCHANGE OF TOASTS

The State Dining Room

8:38 P.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Mr. President, Mrs. Kim, distinguished guests, four months ago the First Lady and I were deeply honored by the warm hospitality that the President and Mrs. Kim extended to us during our visit to Korea, including a memorable state dinner at Korea's Blue House. Tonight it is our pleasure to welcome President and Mrs. Kim to the first state dinner we've held here at the White House.

Mr. President, your leadership for democracy and your great personal sacrifice in the cause of democracy in Korea has been an inspiration to freedom-loving people around the world. And you have provided leadership, as well, for your country's remarkable economic performance which has made Korea a model for other nations. Terrain that once was bomb-scarred and war-ravaged today supports modern factories and new skyscrapers. In just 33 years, Korea's output has increased and astounding 100 fold.

The optimism and perseverance that have made South Korea great can also be found in abundance here in our Korean-American community. Over one million Korean-Americans today are contributing greatly to the dynamism of our American life. They are building bonds of cooperation across an ocean of opportunity -- bonds that will serve our two nations well as we meet the many challenges that face us both in the years ahead.

For 43 years, Mr. President, America and Korea have stood shoulder to shoulder to preserve security on the peninsula. Today new challenges, such as North Korea's nuclear program, continue to demand our vigilance and our determined effort. But they also demand that we demonstrate vision. You and I share a vision, Mr. President, a vision of a Korea at peace and one day reunited on terms acceptable to the Korean people.

During my visit to Korea in July, I was moved not only by the beauty of the Land of the Morning Calm, but also by the spirit of the people. When I visited Seoul, I gained a better appreciation of the scope of Korea's economic success -- the miracle on the Han. When I stood on the somber bridge at the Point of No Return, I gained a deeper appreciation for Korea's continuing security challenges. When I spoke to the national assembly, I gained an inspiring appreciation of Korea's commitment to democracy. And when I went jogging with President Kim, (laughter) I gained a fresh appreciation for the warmth, the vigor and the endurance of Korea's leader. (Laughter.)

President Kim, it is with great admiration for you and for the people of Korea that I invite everyone here to join me in a toast to you and to the Republic of Korea. May democracy continue to flourish there and may the dream of peaceful reunification on the Korean peninsula soon become a reality.

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To President and Mrs. Kim and the people of the Republic of Korea. Hear, hear. (Applause.)

PRESIDENT KIM: President and Mrs. Clinton, distinguished guests, I'm deeply grateful to President and Mrs. Clinton for this wonderful state dinner for myself, my wife and the members of my delegation.

I had a very pleasant and amicable time with President Clinton in Seoul last July, and also I confirmed our friendship in Seattle in the APEC conference. Through my several meetings with him I was very impressed with his frank and warm personality and excellent leadership and passion for democracy.

The APEC leaders' economic conference held in Seattle last week was a very timely and important event for many countries of the Asia Pacific region which is emerging as the global economic center. I believe that its signal, the quiet but undeniable opening of the Asia Pacific era. I would like to take this opportunity as one of the leaders in the region to thank President Clinton for having successfully hosted that important meeting. And I express my sincere congratulations to the President.

America and Korea have been endeavoring to carry out the changes and reforms necessary to adapt to the rapidly changing world. And I sincerely hope that the efforts under the leadership of President Clinton to make the future better for America will be successful.

As a reform-minded colleague in these fast changing times, I feel a renewed sense of kinship and solidarity with President Clinton. At the same time, I would like to reaffirm here that our people fervently hope that the United States of America will remain a world leader and our powerful ally. It is my firm conviction that as we both treasure the common values and systems of liberal democracy and market economy, our two peoples will be able to build an exemplary partnership.

Mr. President, Mrs. Clinton and distinguished guests, the deep relationship between our two nations has not been built overnight. This solid friendship has been based upon the sweat and blood of so many people who endeavor to promote understanding and interaction over a long period of time, as illustrated by the noble sacrifices of young Americans who fought in the Korean War for freedom as well as the devotion of the American Peace Corps volunteers.

One such person is Ambassador James Laney, who has recently assumed his post in Korea. Ambassador Laney was an Army lieutenant in the U.S. forces that landed in Korea in 1945. Later, he contributed greatly to the development of the Republic of Korea through educational and missionary endeavors. I firmly believe that such deep-rooted ties between our two peoples underpin our everlasting alliance and partnership. I know that our gathering here this evening vividly symbolizes the existence of such a close relationship.

Yesterday, I had the honor of receiving the Averell Harriman Democracy Award. The American people have steadfastly supported and encouraged democratic development in Korea. And I believe that this award is the embodiment of both the congratulations and encouragement they send to the Korean people. It also reflects the firm bonds of friendship between our two peoples.

Our Korean forefathers held to the simple truth that a deep well never runs dry. I now believe that we should carefully preserve the deep well that will continue to nourish the bonds of friendship between our peoples in the years to come. This is, of course, the well of democracy and liberty.

Distinguished guests, when President Clinton visited Seoul last July, he spoke about the spring of hope and the spring of democracy. Here we are having a season of harvest and a season of thanksgiving.

Since I had an excellence chance of jogging together with President Clinton when he visited Korea in July, we will jog again tomorrow morning. (Laughter and applause.)

In hopes that both our peoples have a great harvest, please join me in a toast to the good health of President and Mrs. Clinton, and to the everlasting friendship and prosperity of the peoples of the United States of America and the Republic of Korea. Thank you very much. (Applause.)

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8:55 P.M. EST

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